A

VINDICATION

OF THE

Church of England

From the foul Aſperſions of

Schiſm and Hereſie

Unjuſtly caſt upon Her by

The Church of Rome.

PART. I.

by Michael Altham

(2 pts were published)

Whereas there is among you envying, and ſtrife, and diviſions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? 1 Cor. 3. 3.

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A VINDICATION OF THE Church of England, &c.

The INTRODUCTION.

THere is nothing more frequent among those of the Romish Communion, than to charge those of the Reformation with the guilt of Schism and Heresie. They blacken us with those odious names of Schismatick and Heretick; and though we do publickly declare our abhorrence of those Crimes, and disavow both the name and thing; yet must we be represented as such, and under that Character be exposed to the World.

Whether this charge be just or unjust, will appear by the sequel of this Discourse. But whethersoever it be, certain it is, that it is generally taken for granted among them, that we are such. A late Authour of theirs, in answer to this Question, Why are you a Catholick? *having (as he thinks) charged these Crimes home upon Protestants, at length, summs up his harangue in these words,* p. 12. "*Now it being impossible for Protestants to* "*excuse, much less to justifie their manifest Schism, to what* "*purpose is it to enter into debate with them about particu-*

" lar points of Doctrine? As long as the charge of Schism
" ſubſiſts, uncleared by them, and this Schiſm grounded
" on pretended dangerous errors in the Catholick Church,
" being Schiſmaticks, they are Hereticks too, a d ſo con-
" demned by themſelves, and conſequently not to be heark-
" ned to, when they would raiſe particular Controverſies;
" ſince this one general Controverſie determines againſt
" them all particular debates.

And now who would not think that here were a fair end put to all debates, between the Church of Rome *and us? for if we be really Schiſmaticks, and our Schiſm ſo manifeſt that it will admit of no excuſe, much leſs of any juſtification; then this Gentleman is in the right, that it is to little purpoſe to enter into debate with us about particular points of Doctrine. But if we be not only Schiſmaticks but Hereticks too, then ought we not to be hearkned to in any particular Controverſie whatſoever.*

But if this Gentleman ſhould happen to be miſtaken in all this, and that we are neither Schiſmaticks nor Hereticks; but that our Separation from the Church of Rome *is not only excuſable, but juſtifiable too; being grounded, not on pretended, but really dangerous errors, not in the Catholick Church, but in the particular Church of* Rome: *then I hope we may ſtand upon even ground with them, and be admitted to debate the matter in difference between us; which if we be, as they hitherto have done, ſo I hope they always will find us ready to ſtand the ſhock, and make good our ground.*

As for the Crimes they charge us with, we have as great, it may be a greater abhorrence of them than they have; let them draw them in the moſt frightfull ſhapes imaginable, let them expoſe them under the moſt black and diſmal Character that is poſſible, yet can they not repreſent them worſe than we already think of them. So far are we from owning either the name or thing. We

believe

believe they are moſt horrible ſins, ſo dangerous and deſtructive that Men are thereby out of the ordinary ways and means of Salvation; they tear in pieces the Myſtical Body of Chriſt, and are an inlet to all thoſe miſchiefs that do or can happen to the Church of God. And after ſuch a Declaration as this, can we be thought to believe our ſelves guilty of them?

We are thus far agreed, that Schiſm and Hereſie are dangerous ſins, deſtructive of the peace and order, the well-being at leaſt, if not the Being of God's Church; and ſuch ſins as without a true and timely Repentance will unavoidably and eternally ruine thoſe that are guilty of them. It will therefore greatly concern all Perſons, as well Papiſts as Proteſtants, to clear themſelves of theſe Crimes.

To wipe off this ſcandal, which is ſo unjuſtly thrown upon the Church of England, *and thoſe in Communion with her, is the deſign of theſe Papers. And to effect this, I know no better way than by laying open the nature and true notion of theſe two Crimes,* viz. *Schiſm and Hereſie; and then conſidering to whom they are applicable. This I ſhall endeavour to doe as briefly and as plainly as I can. But becauſe they are different Crimes, to avoid confuſion, I ſhall conſider them apart; and in the firſt place ſhall begin with that of Schiſm.*

SECT. I.

Of Schism in general.

THE word Schism in its original signification imports no more but only a Division, Rent, or Breach; and is more properly applicable unto things than Persons. I could, if it were necessary, produce several instances out of prophane Authours, where it is thus used; but waving these, I shall at present offer you only one instance, in which our Blessed Saviour thus applies the word. *No Man*, saith he, *puts a piece of new Cloth into an old Garment, for that which is put in taketh from the Garment,* ἡ αἶρει ἀπὸ τοῦ ἱματίου, *and the Rent* or Breach *is made worse*, Mat. 9. 16.

When therefore we meet with this word applied to Persons, it is not properly, but Metaphorically used; importing a Division among them, occasioned by misunderstanding, diversity of opinions, discontent, or otherwise. Now forasmuch as every Division supposes an Unity, and that Unity broken; it cannot be applied to single Persons, but Persons in Society, who live in Communion with one another, and are obliged so to doe by some common Ties and Obligations.

There are two great and eminent Societies in the World, *viz.* the Civil and Ecclesiastical; and both these are the Subjects of Schism; *i. e.* they are both liable to have their Unity broken, their Peace disturbed,

bed, and their Communion rent and ſhattered, if not diſſolved by evil members.

As for the former, *viz.* the Civil State, when, by ſome factious and ſeditious Members, Feuds and Animoſities are fomented; and by that means the Unity is broken, and the body divided into ſeveral parties; then doth it labour under a dangerous Schiſm. We have an eminent inſtance hereof in Holy Writ? *The Ten Tribes of Iſrael being violently rent and torn from the Houſe of David, in the days of Reboboam.* Nor are we without as great an inſtance in our own memories, and in this Kingdom. But this is not the Schiſm we are now to treat of. 1 King. 12. v. 16.

As for the other, *viz.* the Eccleſiaſtical State, it is no leſs ſubject to it than the Civil. And hath been ſo much peſtered therewith, that from the firſt foundation thereof untill this day, we can hardly name a time, I am ſure no long time, in which it did ever enjoy perfect Peace and Tranquillity. How much the Church of God is broken and divided, and crumbled into parties and factions at this day, is but too apparent; and who can look upon thoſe wounds and bruiſes which ſhe hath received thereby, without melting into tears, and being overwhelmed with grief and ſorrow? How great and crying their ſin is, who have been the occaſion thereof, they will one day find, and ſeverely ſuffer for it, unleſs with the tears of true and unfeigned Repentance, they do in time waſh off the guilt of it, and by that means find favour with God. I pray God give us all grace ſeriouſly to conſider what ſhare we have in the Church's Sufferings, and in our ſeveral places to make it our great and only buſineſs to reſtore Peace and Unity thereunto.

SECT.

SECT. II.

Of Schiſm in the Church.

THIS is the Crime which by our Adverſaries is laid to our charge, and this is that which I have undertaken to vindicate the Church of *England* from. And it is high time to doe it, for on that account they begin to look very ſcornfully upon us, and eſteem us no better than Heathens and Publicans. And we are roundly told, that whilſt our Schiſm ſubſiſts uncleared, it is to no purpoſe to enter into debate with us about any particular points of Doctrine, nor are we to be hearkned to in any particular Controverſie. But if a bare accuſation without proof be a ſufficient Conviction, they may doe well to look to themſelves; for there are thoſe who will not ſtick to charge them with the ſame Crime, and perhaps upon better grounds than they charge us; and if ſo, then their Argument may be retorted upon themſelves. But I do not think a bare Re-crimination ſufficient either to clear us, or burthen them, and therefore I have choſen another method, *viz.* By laying open the Nature of Schiſm, and ſtating the Notion of it in ſo large, plain and comprehenſive terms, that it may eaſily be applyed to thoſe who are guilty of it. And in purſuance of this method, I ſhall now preſent you with a Definition of Schiſm.

Definition

Definition of Schiſm.

Schiſm is a voluntary and cauſeleſs Separation from the Communion of a Chriſtian Church of which we are Members.

This I take to be as large and comprehenſive a Definition of Schiſm as they can juſtly require. By this we are willing to be tryed, and if found guilty, to ſubmit to the Cenſure due to Schiſmaticks; and would willingly hope (though as yet we have no great reaſon for it) that our Adverſaries will be ſo ingenuous too.

To put the matter therefore upon trial, I ſhall take this Definition in pieces, and having laid the ſeveral parts before you proceed to diſcourſe of them ſeverally.

1. Schiſm is a Separation, *i. e.* a breach of Unity, and dividing of ſome well compacted Body.

2. It is a Separation from a Chriſtian Church, *i. e.* from ſuch a Society between which and us, there either is or ought to be a Religious Union and Conjunction; for between *Chriſtians* and *Jews* or *Turks*, there can be no Schiſm, becauſe they are not joyned together in any Religious Society.

3. It is a Separation from the Communion of that Church, in Faith, Worſhip and Government, under that notion, as they are bonds of Communion.

4. It is a voluntary and cauſeleſs Separation, *i. e.* being neither forced thereunto, nor having any ſufficient cauſe or ground for ſo doing.

5. It is a Separation from that Church of which we are Members, *i. e.* which hath a jurisdiction over us, and to which we owe subjection and obedience.

SECT. III.

I. *Schism is a Separation.*

THE word Schism naturally imports a Separation, and the word Separation, as naturally implies a breach of Unity, in which consists a good part of the Nature of Schism. Yet are they not terms convertible, for though every Schism be a Separation, yet every Separation is not a Schism, in the strict notion of it, unless it be attended with all those other requisites of a Schism. There may be a good and lawfull, as well as an evil and sinfull Separation; If a Separation be grounded upon good reason, and managed to good ends and purposes, then is it not only good and lawfull, nor only excusable, but very well justifiable too. But if there be no good ground for it, nor any good end promoted by it, then is it evil and unlawfull, and by no means excusable, much less justifiable. The former of these seems to be warranted by the express Doctrine of St. *Paul*, who tells us,

2 Cor. 6. v. 14, 15, 16, 17. *That there can be no fellowship between righteousness and unrighteousness, nor any Communion between light and darkness, nor any concord between Christ and Belial, nor any participation between a believer and an infidel, nor any agreement between the Temple of God and Idols.* And thence concludes,

cludes, *Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye ſeparate, ſaith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you.* And the other ſeems to be as plainly condemned by the ſame Apoſtle, who commands us *to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace.* Eph. 4. 3.

This may be farther illuſtrated by ſome familiar inſtances. Suppoſe a Society of Thieves and Robbers, or any other ſort of wicked men, united and linked together by ſome common ties, rules and laws, framed and deviſed by themſelves, for the ſupport of their wicked Community; if any one ſhould ſeparate himſelf from that Company, and thereby not only break the Unity, but doe what in him lies to diſſolve the Society it ſelf; would this be imputed to him as a Crime? Or would it not rather be looked upon by all mankind as a good and generous, and in a ſober ſenſe as a meritorious Act? Or ſuppoſe any particular Society of Men, though legally eſtabliſhed, yet making the terms of their Communion ſuch, as could not in honeſty and juſtice be complyed with; if any one ſhould ſeparate himſelf from that Society, would it be a Crime in him? Or ought he not rather to be commended for it? But it is far otherwiſe in the Body Politique, which is the aggregation of all particular Perſons, and all particular lawfull Societies; If any one ſhall ſeparate himſelf therefrom, and thereby break the Unity, and diſturb the Peace thereof; he will by all Men be judged guilty of Sedition and Treaſon: And the reaſon is evident, becauſe in the two former Caſes men have a greater liberty of judging and acting, than they have in this. For thoſe at beſt are but the Ordinances of Men, but Government is the Ordinance of God; And therefore though upon juſt ground we may ſeparate from them, though it be to the hazard of

their Peace and Unity; Yet can we have no juſt ground of Separation from this. For though the Governours may ſometimes happen to be wicked and ungodly Men, yet the Government ſtill is ſacred, and it is not for Subjects to call their Sovereigns to account; It is our duty to ſtudy and pray for the peace and ſafety, and to acquieſce in the rules and determinations thereof; chuſing rather to ſuffer under it, than diſturb the Peace of it; And if either through the ignorance or inadvertency of thoſe in Authority there happen any Male-adminiſtration in the Government, it is not the Governed but the Governours, that ſtand accountable to God for it.

And thus it is in the Church: Let us ſuppoſe a number of Schiſmaticks and Hereticks who have banded themſelves together, and formed themſelves into a Society under the ſtricteſt Rules and Laws they could deviſe, as the Donatiſts and Novatians of old did. If any one ſhould ſeparate himſelf from their Communion, and return into the boſome of the Church; This certainly would never be imputed to him as a Crime. Or ſuppoſe a particular Church, though lawfully conſtituted, and eſtabliſhed under lawfull Governours, ſhould make the terms of her Communion ſuch, as that her Neighbour Churches could not without ſin and danger hold Communion with her; would a Separation in this caſe be adjudged a Schiſm? Or would it not rather be look'd upon as their duty and intereſt to withdraw from her? But it is far otherwiſe in the One, Holy, Catholick and Apoſtolick Church; for though there may be ſome reaſons to warrant a Separation from thoſe; yet can there be no reaſon why we ſhould ſeparate from Her. And the reaſon is evident, becauſe ſhe being founded by God, and having his promiſe for her preſervation, can never give any occaſion.

ſion thereof. Whoſoever therefore ſeparateth from Her, puts himſelf out of the ordinary ways and means of Salvation, and becomes guilty of the greateſt and moſt dangerous Schiſm.

By this time, I hope, 'tis evident, that though every Schiſm import a Separation, yet every Separation doth not make a Schiſm. Nor is it every Unity that we are to be ſo tender of, but only the Catholick Unity of God's Church. And now let us apply this to our preſent Caſe.

We are charged with Schiſm by the Church of *Rome*, becauſe we have ſeparated from her Communion. Though this might ſafely be denyed, and it might perhaps upon better grounds be ſaid, that ſhe hath ſeparated from us, not we from Her; yet for the preſent we'll admit of it, and give her this reaſon for it; We have ſeparated from Her, becauſe ſhe hath made the terms of her Communion ſuch, as, till they are reform'd, we cannot without ſin and danger joyn with Her.

The Church of *Rome* being only a particular Church (and not the Catholick Church, as ſome of her Paraſites would fain perſwade us) hath no more ſecurity from Errour and Miſtakes than the reſt of Her Neighbours. And therefore if this reaſon be true, ſhe cannot deny (if ſhe will be ingenuous) but that we have a juſt ground of Separation; and conſequently are no Schiſmaticks. And that it is true, as it hath often been demonſtrated, ſo we are ready ſtill to doe the ſame again, whenever we ſhall be called to it. But that being no part of my deſign at this time, I ſhall proceed.

SECT.

SECT. IV.

II. *Schism is a Separation from a Christian Church.*

AS Separation is the Act, so a Christian Church is the Subject of Schism, *i. e.* As it is a body compacted and united together by the Bands and Ligaments of our common Christianity. For where there is no Union or Conjunction, there can be no Schism; And therefore between Christians and Jews or Mahometans there can be no Schism, because they are not joyned together in any Religious Society. Now the Christian Church may be considered either as it is Catholick or Universal, or as it is Particular.

1. If we consider it as Catholick and Universal, there are three several Notions of it. Sometimes it is taken for the Catholick Church diffusive, *i. e.* for the whole body of Christians dispersed upon the face of the whole Earth; and so it comprehends all Persons, and all particular Churches professing Christianity. And this I take to be the true and genuine notion of the one holy Catholick and Apostolick Church, mentioned in our Creed. And whosoever shall make a Defection or Separation from this Church, will be found guilty of a manifest, dangerous, and most abominable Schism. Sometimes it is taken for the Catholick Church Representative, *i. e.* for the Prelates and Pastors of the Universal Church, delegated by their several particular Churches, and Assembled in a Council truly free and general. And wherever we meet with such an one,

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we pay all deference and regard that is due to the Decisions and Determinations of it. And if any Man, or any Society of Men shall set up his or their private Judgments against the publick Judgment of the Church, declared in a Council truly free and general, and shall be so tenacious of their own opinions, as upon that account to break Communion with the Church, I do not see, how they can be excused from the sin of Schism. Sometimes it is taken for the Catholick Church virtual, and so it is generally understood by our Adversaries, though they do not agree among themselves. For some of them would confine the notion of the Church virtual to the Pope alone, others to the Pope in Conclave; some to the Pope in Council, but these differ among themselves, some telling us that the Pope is above the Council, others that the Council is above the Pope: Others there are, who, to put a better Face upon the matter, do, by the Catholick Church virtual, understand the Church of *Rome*, and all those other Churches which are in Communion with Her. I shall not undertake to arbitrate this difference, but leaving these several parties to compromise the matter among themselves, as well as they can: I shall call in an unexceptionable witness to testifie that this is the notion which the Church of *Rome* now hath of the Catholick Church, and that is *Monsieur de Meaux* the late Bishop of *Condom*, who in his exposition of the Catholick Faith, *&c.* tells us he will say nothing, but what shall be warranted by the Church, and to make his words good, he produceth great Credentials from the Pope, and many other great Men. This great and learned Prelate in his Exposition of the Catholick Faith, *&c.* hath these words. *We acknowledge a Head established by God, to conduct his whole Flock in his paths, which Head is the Pope, as Successour to St.* Peter, *the Prince* Sect. 21. p. 50.

of

of the Apoſtles, and that the Papal Chair is the common Centre of all Catholick Unity. And in another place, he promiſeth not to meddle with any thing but the Decrees of the Council of *Trent*, becauſe in them the Church hath given her deciſion upon theſe matters now in Agitation. Which Council was called by the Pope's Authority only, and the true ſenſe of all its Decrees, (by the Bull of Pope *Pius* 4th.) reſerved to be explained by him alone. So that the great noiſe of the Catholick Church is at laſt dwindled into the Roman Catholick, which we of the Church of *England*, take to be a contradiction in *Terminis*, the ſame with a particular Univerſal; for they may as well ſay, that the City of *Rome* is all the World, as that the Church of *Rome* is the Catholick Church. Beſides this notion of the Catholick Church virtual is altogether new, having no foundation either in the Holy Scriptures, or in any Primitive and Authentick Antiquity, and therefore we can by no means admit of it.

Sect. 1. *p.* 2.

This is that Church by which, and towards which we are charged with the guilt of the horrible ſin of Schiſm. And God be thanked it is no worſe, for from any Criminal Schiſm in this caſe, I hope we ſhall, without any great difficulty, be able to acquit our ſelves.

2. If we conſider a Chriſtian Church as it is particular, then are we to underſtand it of a number of Men profeſſing Chriſtianity, formed into a Society under lawfull Governours, and governed by ſuch Laws and Rules, as are not different from, but agreeable to the Laws and Rules of the Catholick Church. And if any Man, or number of Men, who are Members of that Society, ſhall without juſt cauſe ſeparate themſelves from the Communion thereof; he or they ſo doing are certainly guilty of Schiſm. Nor is every occaſion which a capricious humour or diſcontent may ſuggeſt

ſuggeſt to us, to be taken as a ſufficient ground of Separation; Nay though there be ſomething really amiſs, or at leaſt we are perſuaded that there is ſo, in the Doctrine, or Diſcipline of that Church whereof we are members; yet ought we rather to ſuſpect our own Judgments, and ſuppreſs our own Sentiments, than break the unity and peace thereof. In a word, unleſs ſuch a particular Church ſhall make the terms of her Communion ſuch as cannot be complied with without ſin, I do not know any other juſt ground of Separation therefrom.

Thus have I conſidered the ſubject of Schiſm in its greateſt latitude. And now let us ſee how far any thing that may be gathered from hence can affect the Church of *England*.

1. If the Church of *England* hath made no defection from the Catholick Church diffuſive, *i. e.* from the *One Holy Catholick and Apoſtolick Church*, which compriſeth all men and all ſocieties of men profeſſing Chriſtianity; Nor from the Catholick Church repreſentative, *i. e.* the Prelats and Paſtours of the univerſal Church lawfully aſſembled in a Council that is truly free and general. If ſhe profeſs no other Doctrine, nor exerciſe any other Diſcipline, than what ſhe hath received from *Chriſt* and his *Apoſtles*, and was conſtantly profeſt and exerciſed by their Succeſſours in the primitive Church. If ſhe be willing to ſubmit all matters in difference between Her and any other Siſter-Church to be tried by the Holy Scriptures, the primitive Fathers, and the Deciſions of the four firſt General Councils. Then can ſhe not be juſtly charged with Schiſm upon that account. And that ſhe doth and is willing to doe all this that is here ſuppoſed, we are ready to make good, whenever our Adverſaries ſhall give us the occaſion ſo to doe.

2. If their notion of a Church virtually Catholick be

altogether new, without any foundation either in the holy Scriptures, or in any primitive and authentick Antiquity; then the power and privileges which the preſent Church of *Rome* challengeth upon that account are mere nullities, and conſequently the Schiſm which ſhe chargeth the Church of *England* with upon that ſcore, a mere *Chimera*, which vaniſheth of it ſelf. If they think to avoid the force of this ſuppoſition, they muſt produce ſome good and authentick Record, which as yet hath not been diſcovered.

3. If the Church of *Rome* be only a particular Church, and no otherwiſe Catholick than her Neighbours are, who profeſs the ſame common Chriſtianity. If ſhe can have no more power to cenſure us, than we have to cenſure Her, then can ſhe not without great preſumption, and greater injuſtice, charge us with the ſin of Schiſm. 'Tis true indeed we do not joyn in communion with her, and the reaſon why we do not, I have given in the third Section. But it is as true, that we hold the Catholick Unity, and for the ſake of that, they themſelves will grant, that we may lawfully depart from the Unity of any particular Church.

SECT. V.

3. *Schiſm is a Separation from the Communion of a Chriſtian Church.*

AS the Act of Schiſm is Separation, and the Subject thereof a Chriſtian Church; ſo the Object in and about which the Separation is made, is the Communion of that Church. Now there are three great Bonds of Communion, *viz.* Faith, Worſhip and Government; and whoſoever ſhall ſeparate either from the

the Catholick or any particular Church whereof he is a Member in any of these, I do not see how he or they so doing can be acquitted from the guilt of Schism, unless the corruption in some one or more of these be so great as to render the Communion sinfull to him who knows it.

SECT. VI.

I. *Of Faith as it is a Bond of Communion.*

BY Faith here I understand the established Doctrine of the Church, that common Christianity which we all profess to own and embrace. For it is not every Doctrine that is received and taught in any particular Church, that is properly the Bond of Communion, but such Doctrine as is or ought to be received by all. It is plain, and our Adversaries themselves will acknowledge it, that we may and ought to differ from particular Churches in some Doctrines; Otherwise why do they differ from us, from the *Greek* Church, and indeed all other Churches besides their own in many things? On this score is it, that we cannot receive their new Articles of Faith, those additions which are made unto, and those alterations which are made in the old and common Christianity, by their Council of *Trent*.

We believe all that is contained in the Holy Scriptures to be infallibly true, all that was ever taught by Christ and his Apostles, and their Successours the Primitive Pastours and Governours of the Church, we readily comply with; We believe all the Articles contained in those three ancient Creeds, *viz* that commonly called the Apostles, the *Nicene*, and the *Athanasian*.

naſian. We are willing to ſubmit to all the Deciſions and the Determinations of the four firſt General Councils, and to any Council that is lawfully called, and truely free and general. We are ready to receive all Traditions that are truly Apoſtolical, and we are willing to embrace any other truth as yet unknown to us, whenſoever or by whomſoever it ſhall be duly made out to be ſo. And whilſt we this doe, we cannot truly be charged to have broken Communion with the Catholick Church, nor juſtly reputed Schiſmaticks therefrom.

And as for the Church of *Rome*, ſhe being only a particular Church, hath no juriſdiction at all over the Church of *England*, and conſequently no more power to cenſure us, than we have to cenſure her; for in this caſe the rule holds, (*Par in parem non habet imperium*) Equals have no Authority over one another. And therefore for her to impoſe her new Articles of Faith upon the Church of *England*, and becauſe ſhe refuſeth to receive them, and joyn Communion with her upon thoſe terms, preſently cry out Schiſm, Schiſm, is ſo idle, ſo vain, ſo unaccountable a Clamour, as I am perſwaded the Learned among them cannot but diſapprove it. For whilſt we hold the Catholick Faith entire, and maintain Communion with the One Holy Catholick and Apoſtolick Church therein; though we differ from the Church of *Rome*, or any other particular Church in ſome Doctrines; Yet is it impoſſible that we ſhould be guilty of a Schiſmatical Separation either from her or them.

SECT. VII.

II. *Of Worſhip as it is a Bond of Communion.*

BY Worſhip here, I mean Publick Worſhip, and that conſidered only in its Subſtantials and Eſſentials,

als, not as it is clothed with particular Modes, Rites and Ceremonies. Otherwiſe it can be no Bond of Communion. The ſubſtantial and eſſential Parts of Publick Worſhip, I take to be theſe, *viz.* Prayer, reading the Holy Canon, interpreting the ſame, and the adminiſtration of the bleſſed Sacraments. Now theſe in divers Churches may be performed in different Manners, and with different Rites and Ceremonies, and yet thoſe Churches, notwithſtanding this, may ſtill hold Communion with the Catholick Church, and conſequently be guilty of no Schiſmatical Separation therefrom, nor from one another. But if we by Worſhip underſtand the eſtabliſhed Publick Worſhip of a particular Church, then are we to conſider it not as abſtracted from, but clothed with ſuch Modes, Rites and Ceremonies as are thought convenient by that Church. And if any one who is a Member of ſuch a Church ſhall, upon any pretended offence taken againſt any ſuch Modes, Rites and Ceremonies, ſeparate himſelf from the Publick Worſhip, I do not ſee how he can be acquitted from the guilt of Schiſm.

And this I take to be the caſe not only of the Proteſtant Diſſenters from the Church of *England* (as they call themſelves) but of *Engliſh Roman* Catholicks too. For that they did hold actual Communion with us many years together in the beginning of Queen *Elizabeth*'s Reign, and neither then, nor ever ſince did pretend to take any offence at the Subſtantials of our Worſhip, is very plain and evident. And that it was not we that ſeparated from them, but they that ſeparated from us, is as manifeſt; and therefore it will concern them more than us, to clear themſelves from the ſin of Schiſm. And for this I know no other Plea they can make uſe of, than their obedience to the Univerſal Paſtour of God's Church, which Plea is to be conſidered under the next great Bond of Communion, *viz.* Government.

SECT.

SECT. VIII.

III. *Of Government as it is a Bond of Communion.*

THat our great and Univerſal Paſtour, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, did found and conſtitute a Church, and that he did not leave it without Laws and Rules to be governed by, nor without proper Governours inveſted with Power and Authority to exert and execute thoſe Laws we ſtedfaſtly believe. But that he ever did delegate all his Power to any *One*, or ſubſtitute any *One* Perſon to be the Univerſal Paſtour of the Church after him, we cannot believe, becauſe we have no ground for it either in Scripture, or in any primitive and authentick Antiquity. And indeed how ſhould we? for till the Biſhops of *Rome* and *Conſtantinople* began to envy one another's Greatneſs, and to ſtrive for Supremacy, (which was about 600 years after Chriſt) the Church was never acquainted with any ſuch name or thing, as is now claimed. And no ſooner did it adventure to peep abroad, but warning was given againſt it as Antichriſtian, and that by one of their Popes. And when afterwards it was publickly uſurped, it was condemned by a general Council; and they are not yet agreed among themſelves where to fix it. And therefore they cannot in reaſon expect that we ſhould build our Faith upon ſuch an uncertain Foundation, or make that a Bond of Communion in the Church, which the Church from 600 years and upwards knew nothing of.

That Government is a Bond of Communion in the Chriſtian Church, we acknowledge; and that it was never lodged in the hands of any one Perſon ſince our Saviour, I think is very plain and evident. But where then doth it reſide? This will beſt be known, by conſidering

ſidering how it is derived. That it was united in the Perſon of our Bleſſed Saviour, will be acknowledged on all hands; and where he left it, there we are to look for it. Now that he left it with his Apoſtles, and made them equal ſharers therein, I think is very plain; (notwithſtanding that pretence which is made by our Adverſaries, that it was lodged in *Peter* alone; a pretence which hath been ſo often, and ſo miſerably baffled, and which if it were true would doe them no ſervice, that I wonder they are not aſhamed to bring it upon the ſtage any more.) And that from the Apoſtles it was derived to their Succeſſours, the Biſhops and Paſtours of God's Church, is the received opinion of all Antiquity. And that it now lies diſperſed among all the Paſtours and Biſhops of particular Churches, (unleſs they be lawfully called and aſſembled in Synods or Councils) under the Power, Protection and Aſſiſtance of Civil Authority, we verily believe. This is the notion we have of the viſible and external Government of the Catholick Church, and as it hath been, ſo, if there were occaſion for it, may it ſtill be made appear to have been the very notion, that all the World (except thoſe who have ſubmitted to the Uſurpation of *Rome*) ever had, and ſtill have of it to this day. Now the Laws and Rules by which this Government is adminiſtred, are to be found in the Holy Scriptures, in the Uſages and Cuſtoms of the Primitive Church, and in the Canons and Conſtitutions of the four firſt general Councils.

Epiſcopatus unus eſt, cujus à ſingulis in ſolidum pars tenetur. Cypr. *de Unitate Eccleſiæ Edit. Oxon.* p. 108.

But if by Government, we underſtand the Government of particular Churches, then is it lodged in the Paſtours and Governours of thoſe Churches, and is to be adminiſtred by them according to ſuch Laws and Rules as are agreeable to thoſe of the Catholick Church.

And

And in this caſe, it can have no influence from one National Church to another; for, as ſuch, they are equal; and Equals have no power over one another. But whoſoever is a Member of any ſuch Church, and refuſeth all due obedience to the Paſtours and Governours thereof, doth thereby contract the guilt of Schiſm.

Now whether the Church of *England*, or the Church of *Rome*, by the violation of all theſe Bonds of Communion, have diſturbed the Peace of the Chriſtian Church, broken the Unity of the Univerſal, and of all particular Churches, and thereby incurred the guilt of Schiſm; you may take a proſpect in this ſhort parallel which I ſhall now lay before you.

1. As for Faith conſidered as a Bond of Communion. What the Church of *England* believes, and what ſhe is ready and willing to comply with, I have told you in the *6th.* Sect. But the Church of *Rome* not contented therewith, added to the ſacred Canon ſome Apocryphal Books, which were never before received either into the Jewiſh or Chriſtian Canon. And as if the revealed Will of God were an imperfect Rule, ſhe undertakes to ſupply the defects of it, by groundleſs Traditions. She makes new Creeds (witneſs the *Trent* Creed) and that both without the conſent of the preſent, and againſt the Doctrine and Practice of ancient Churches. Now which of theſe hath violated this Bond of Communion, Judge ye.

2. As for Worſhip conſidered as a Bond of Communion, I have given you our Sentiments of it, and told you wherein it conſiſts in the *7th.* Sect. Now how far the Church of *Rome* hath corrupted that pure Worſhip of God, both by her ſubtractions and additions, I ſhall briefly acquaint you. As for Prayer it muſt be performed in publick in an unknown tongue, which the people underſtand not. So that they muſt not know what they pray for, and conſequently cannot with any true devotion

devotion ſay, *Amen.* It muſt be offered to Saints and Angels, and not immediately to God, who glories to be ſtiled a God hearing prayers: and this we take to be an Act of Religious Worſhip due to the Creatour only, but by them paid to Creatures. As for the reading of Holy Scriptures, if any portion of them be read in publick, it muſt be in *Latin*, a Language not underſtood by the People, and therefore impoſſible for them to be inſtructed by it. It is true indeed they ſometimes interpret ſome portion of Scripture, by preaching in the Vulgar Language; but then the people muſt take all they ſay upon truſt, they muſt not without ſpecial leave be allowed the Bible in their own Language, no not in private, leſt with the Noble *Bereans*, they ſhould examine whether thoſe things be ſo or no. As for the Sacraments, they have added five that were never inſtituted by Chriſt, and taken away half of one of thoſe, which they cannot but own was of his Inſtitution; *i. e.* they deprive the Laity of the Cup in the Lord's Supper; beſides thoſe many Superſtitions which they have intermix'd, and therewith corrupted the pure and primitive Worſhip of God. Now let any indifferent Perſon judge, whether they or we have violated this Bond of Communion, and conſequently which of us may be charged with Schiſm.

3. As for Government conſidered as a Bond of Communion. What our thoughts are of it, you may ſee in the beginning of this Sect. Now how far the Church of *Rome* doth differ, not only from us, but from the Catholick Church both ancient and modern, and from all other particular Churches in this point, will appear, if we conſider: That ſhe uſurps a Dominion condemned as Antichriſtian by one of their own Popes, diſowned by the whole Church at that time, and which we at preſent cannot own without betraying the Liberty of the Church. That by virtue of this Uſurped power

ſhe impoſeth unreaſonable and unlawfull conditions of Communion, and for non-compliance therewith excommunicates not only the Church of *England*, but, as ſome will tell you, three parts of the Chriſtian World beſides. Now if the Church of *Rome* by ſetting up and exerciſing this Exorbitant power, hath broken this Bond of Communion, then who is chargeable with the Schiſm, judge ye.

SECT. IX.

IV. *Schiſm is a voluntary and cauſeleſs Separation from the Communion of a Chriſtian Church.*

THeſe are the two conditions of Schiſm, it muſt be voluntary and cauſeleſs; and from theſe two conditions it receives its greateſt aggravation, and becomes a ſin of the deepeſt dye and greateſt guilt.

1. *It muſt be a Voluntary Separation.*

I call it Voluntary, to diſtinguiſh ſin from puniſhment, ſchiſm from excommunication; for though by the latter a man be caſt out of the Church, and made no member thereof; yet ſtrictly ſpeaking, he is thereby ſeparated from the Church, and doth not ſeparate himſelf. 'Tis true that every ſin is a voluntary act in the ſinner, but doth that excuſe him? or rather doth it not aggravate his guilt? If a man be ſeparated from the communion of the Church by ſome preſſing neceſſity, this may be his misfortune and not his fault: Or if a man be under a conſtraint, and have a force put upon him; if he be frighted with threats and menaces, or wheadled with promiſes and allurements; if his fears and hopes, thoſe two prevalent paſſions in man, be raiſed to that height, as to darken his underſtanding and overpower his will; theſe circumſtances may extenuate

tenuate though they cannot altogether excuſe his guilt. But when a man doeth an evil action not by chance, but of choice; not by force, but by inclination; not raſhly and inconſiderately, but deliberately and adviſedly; this makes his ſin to be exceeding ſinfull. For thereby the Schiſmatick puts himſelf out of the ordinary way and means of ſalvation, divideth the body of Chriſt, deſpiſeth and condemneth the Church of God, and breaketh the bond of peace, which ought to be kept intire and inviolate. And therefore do I make this a Condition of Schiſm, becauſe if we can ſuppoſe a Separation from the communion of the Church to be involuntary, it will not deſerve that name.

SECT. X.

II. *It muſt be a Cauſeleſs Separation*, &c.

THAT Schiſm in it ſelf is a great and grievous ſin, and in its conſequences extremely miſchievous to the Church of God, and to the Schiſmatick himſelf, is agreed on all hands. But how much greater muſt the ſin needs be when thereby all this guilt is contracted, and all this miſchief done without any cauſe, *i. e.* without any ſufficient cauſe?

Now a Separation may be conſidered either as it relates to the Catholick, or Particular Churches. And then a Separation from the Catholick Church taken in the moſt comprehenſive ſenſe, is not Schiſm but Apoſtaſie, and it will be impoſſible for any man to find a ſufficient reaſon for that.

But if it be conſidered as a ſeparation from the communion of ſome particular Church, then it is implied that poſſibly there may be ſuch cauſe given, as may uſtifie the Separation; and if ſo, then the guilt of

Schiſm will lie at the door of that Church which gives ſuch cauſe, and not at his or theirs who ſeparate therefrom. Now I have already told you, that I know no cauſe which can juſtifie ſuch a Separation, ſave onely this, when a Church makes the terms of her communion ſuch as cannot be complied withall without ſin. And in this caſe methinks it is very plain, That it cannot be ſin to ſeparate, when it is ſin to communicate; for no Laws of Men can abrogate or diſſolve the obligation of the expreſs Laws of God. But if there be no ſuch cauſe, then to break communion with any Chriſtian Church, upon any other account, will amount to a Cauſeleſs Separation, and conſequently incur the guilt of Schiſm.

If therefore the Church of *England* ever did, or now doth forſake the communion of the *One Holy Catholick and Apoſtolick Church*; or if ſhe ever did, or now doth voluntarily and cauſelefly break communion with any particular Chriſtian Church, then may there be ſome colour to charge her with the ſin of Schiſm; but if none of all this can be made appear againſt her, then ought ſhe to be acquitted of that charge. Now whether any ſuch thing can be made out againſt her, or whether the whole charge will not fall heavy upon the Church of *Rome*, will appear in the ſequel of this Diſcourſe.

SECT. XI.

V. *Schiſm is a Separation from the Communion of that Church of which we are Members.*

THis is the laſt part of our Definition, and I add theſe words (of which we are Members) becauſe Schiſm imports a Diviſion of ſome united and well compacted Body, or a making two of that which before was but one. On this ſcore is it, that we cannot charge *Turks*, *Pagans* and

and *Jews* with Schiſm, becauſe they never were of the Chriſtian Church, nor joyned with her in any Religious Society. And here the Church will be at a great loſs how to fix the guilt of Schiſm upon the Church of *England*, for if we neither are nor ever of right ought to have been under the Government of that Church, then hath ſhe no Juriſdiction over us, nor do we owe her any ſubjection and obedience, and conſequently cannot be guilty of Schiſm towards her, nor hath ſhe any power to cenſure us for it. We own her to be a Siſter-Church, and a true, though unſound Member of the Catholick Church, and ſo far as ſhe holds the Catholick Faith and Worſhip, we are ready and willing to hold Communion with her. But we cannot ſubmit to her Uſurpations, nor communicate with her in thoſe Errours, Abuſes, Superſtitions, Additions, Subtractions and Alterations, by which ſhe hath ſo groſly corrupted the pure and primitive Faith and Worſhip of God's Church.

SECT. XII.

The Church of England *acquitted from the Scandal of Schiſm.*

IF this Definition of Schiſm be allowed, (as I ſee no cauſe why they ſhould diſown it) and not applicable to the Church of *England*, then is ſhe unjuſtly charged with the guilt of Schiſm by the Church of *Rome*. Now whether it be applicable to the Church of *England* will appear, by taking a review of the ſeveral parts of it.

1. Schiſm is a Separation, *i. e.* a breach of Unity, or a dividing of ſome well compacted Body. And here we are charged for breaking the Unity, and dividing the Body of the *Roman* Catholick Church, as they call it. To which I anſwer, if that Church were truly Catholick either

her in reſpect of place or Doctrine, this charge would lie heavy upon us; but being neither, we ſhall be able with leſs difficulty to anſwer this Objection. It muſt be acknowledged that the Church of *Rome*, at the time of the Reformation, and ſome long time before that had uſurped a certain Power and Dominion over us; and had exerted the ſame in ſuch extravagant impoſitions as at laſt became too heavy for us to bear. That Church had indeed by a long cuſtome gained ſuch an aſcendent over our Fore-fathers, that ſhe had enſlaved their Judgements, and obtruded what ſhe pleaſed upon them; ſhe had unawares led them into many Errours in Doctrine, many Superſtitions in Worſhip, and almoſt ſwallowed up their Liberty in Point of Government. At length it pleaſed God to open the Eyes of our Fore-fathers, to ſee the ſlavery and bondage they were in, and how far they were gone from the Unity of the Catholick Church, both in Faith, in Worſhip, and in Government. To retrieve themſelves, many Efforts were made, and great Endeavours uſed for a Reformation. But none of thoſe prevailing, they at laſt bethought themſelves of caſting off the *Roman* yoke, which by the aſſiſtance of the Civil Authority, not in tumultuary, but in a regular way was effected; and when that was done, then upon mature deliberation they reform thoſe other abuſes which were crept in among them. Whether this broke Catholick Unity or no, let the World judge.

If this be a Schiſm, we muſt own our ſelves guilty of it, but we ſee no reaſon to own it to be ſo yet, for in all this we have done nothing but what we are able to juſtifie before all the World. For even our Adverſaries themſelves will not deny, but that a National Church hath power in it ſelf to reform abuſes within it ſelf. But it may be they will tell us, that we are not a Church, but a faction, or party made up of Schiſmaticks and Hereticks broke looſe from the Church. If this were true, we ſhould have

have little to ſay for our ſelves, but a bare accuſation is no proof. They may do well therefore to recollect themſelves, and conſider, that before *Auſtin* the Monk ſet his Foot in *England*, there was a Chriſtian Church ſettled here under lawfull Governours; which Church oppoſed the proceeding of that proud Monk, and denyed obedience to the See of *Rome*, for which they ſeverely ſuffered. If notwithſtanding all this, our Adverſaries ſhall, as they frequently do, revive that old thred-bare queſtion, ſo often baffled; Where was your Church before the Reformation? Our anſwer is ready, it was where it is, the ſame for ſubſtance now, that it was then; It is indeed reformed and repaired, but not made new; There is not one ſtone of a new foundation laid by us, the old Walls ſtand ſtill, only the overcaſting of thoſe ancient ſtones with the untempered Mortar of new inventions diſpleaſed us, and that we waſhed off. What their own *Durandus* ſaith of material Churches, is very applicable to the Spiritual. If the wall be decayed not at once, but ſucceſſively; it is judged ſtill the ſame Church; and (upon reparation) not to be reconſecrated, but only reconciled. If therefore our Church be the ſame for ſubſtance now, that it was before the Reformation, then it is plain that by our Reformation we made no Separation from the Church; we only laid aſide the corruptions, *i. e.* thoſe unſound and unwholeſome additions, which the Church of *Rome* had made to the ancient Structure of Chriſt's Religion; and when thoſe were removed, the Church which was by them obſcured, appeared again in her primitive Luſtre and Beauty. Now if the Church be the ſame ſtill, it will neceſſarily follow, that we who are of that Church do now hold the ſame Communion in all the Subſtantials and Eſſentials of Religion with all other Chriſtian Churches, that we did before. For as to all the Eſſentials of a Church we hold the ſame Faith, the ſame Worſhip, and the ſame Gover-

Durand. Ration. l. 1.

Government now, that we did before the Reformation; and which now is, and always hath been owned by the Catholick Church in all Ages. And if ſo, then can we not poſſibly be guilty of any Schiſmatical Separation.

2. Schiſm is a Separation from a Chriſtian Church, *i. e.* from ſuch a Society between which and us there is or ought to be a Religious Union and Conjunction. That we cannot upon that ſcore be juſtly charged with any Schiſmatical Separation, either from the Catholick, or any particular Chriſtian Church, I hope is ſufficiently made out in the 4*th.* Sect. of this Diſcourſe, to which I refer the Reader, being unwilling either to give him or my ſelf an unneceſſary trouble.

3. Schiſm is a Separation from the Communion of a Chriſtian Church, in Faith, Worſhip and Government, conſidered as Bonds of Communion. And here we are roundly charged by the Church of *Rome*, with a Schiſmatical Separation from her, and a manifeſt breach of all theſe great Bonds of Communion. But having in the beginning of this Sect. I hope, ſufficiently vindicated the Church of *England* from any Schiſmatical Separation from the Catholick or any other Chriſtian Church, in her Reformation; and cleared her innocency as to the breach of any of theſe great Bonds of Communion, in the 5*th*, 6*th*, 7*th*, and 8*th*, Sections, I ſhall not need to ſay any more of it here. There is only one thing which as yet I have taken no notice of, and with which they often twit us, *viz.* The Derivation of our Orders from them.

Mr. *Harding* in his anſwer to Biſhop *Jewel's* Apology doth mightily triumph in this, telling us, That a Church cannot ſubſiſt without lawfull Paſtours and Governours, that there can be none ſuch without lawfull Ordination by impoſition of hands; that we neither have nor ever had any ſuch but from the Church of *Rome*; that thoſe who received that power from her, becoming Schiſmaticks and Hereticks by their Separation from her, forfeited

ted that power, and could not convey it to others; that therefore we have now no ſuch thing as lawfull Prieſts and Biſhops among us, without which we cannot be a Church; that herein we have broken the great Bond of Communion, *viz.* Government, by departing from that Church from which ours had its Being; and therefore cannot be excuſed from the ſin of Schiſm. To this B. *Jewel* hath given a long, learned and full anſwer, to which I ſhall refer the Reader. He may find it in the ſecond part of the defence of the Apology of the Church of *England*, Chap. 5. Diviſion 1. But to ſhew you in how empty and inſignificant a ſhow this mighty triumph ends, I ſhall here offer ſome few things to conſideration.

1. That the conferring of Orders giveth no Power or Juriſdiction to him or them by whom they are conferred, over him or them on whom they are conferred. For, do we not know, that the Biſhop of *Rome* is always conſecrated by the Biſhop of *Hoſtia*, and yet I hope they will not ſay that the Biſhop of *Hoſtia* is therefore above the Biſhop of *Rome*.

2. Let it be granted that we derive our Orders from the Church of *Rome*, (not as from the Fountain or Original of Orders, but as from the conduct or means of conveyance) I would ask this queſtion, do they believe their Orders to be good and valid, or not? If not, why do they preſume to exerciſe thoſe high and holy Functions to which they are admitted thereby? If they do, then our Orders muſt be good and valid too, and we have as good right as they have to that Succeſſion which they ſo much boaſt of.

3. That the Biſhops and Paſtours of the Church of *England* are true and rightfull Succeſſours to thoſe that have been before them, being elected, conſecrated, confirmed and admitted in as effectual a manner as they were. If their Predeceſſours were deceived in any thing, they ſucceed them in Place, but not in Errour. For

though they were indeed their Predeceſſours in Office, yet were they not the Rulers and Standards of their Faith. And it cannot be denyed but that a Succeſſion in Faith and Doctrine, is far more conſiderable than a Succeſſion of Perſons, and that (God be thanked) we are able to make good from the pure and uncorrupted Fountain. In Doctrine therefore we ſucceed the Church of *Rome*, as the Day ſucceedeth the Night, as the Light ſucceedeth Darkneſs, and as Truth ſucceedeth Errour.

4. That thoſe Biſhops and Paſtours who have once been duly elected, conſecrated, confirmed and admitted in and to thoſe ſacred Functions, do not by departing from the Errours and Superſtitions of any other Church, (though it be that from which they received their Orders) loſe the power that was thereby committed to them, but are ſtill in a capacity to convey the ſame unto others.

5. That the Biſhops and Paſtours of the Church of *England* being legally poſſeſſed of, having duly exerted, and conſtantly and regularly exerciſed this power; the Orders conferred by them by virtue thereof, are to all intents and purpoſes good and valid, and conſequently our Church cannot be ſaid to want true and lawfull Paſtours and Governours.

6. That though the Church of *England*, in her Reformation, have caſt off the Uſurpations, and laid aſide the corruptions of the Church of *Rome*, yet hath ſhe not thereby broken any Bond of Communion with the Chriſtian Church; and therefore cannot juſtly be charged with the guilt of Schiſm. For whilſt ſhe holds faſt thoſe three great Bonds of Communion, *viz.* Faith, Worſhip, and Government, in all the ſubſtantial and eſſential Parts thereof, the guilt of that horrid Schiſm, which hath ſo much bruiſed and wounded, rent and torn the Church of God, can never be laid at her door.

Theſe things I thought good to offer to conſideration, and

and when they are ſeriouſly and deliberately weighed, I do not doubt, but that the ingenuous Reader will ſo well improve them, as to ſatisfie himſelf and others, that all this mighty triumph is no more than a vain and empty ſhow.

4. Schiſm is a voluntary and cauſeleſs Separation from the Communion of a Chriſtian Church, *i. e.* When men have full liberty to mak their own choice, having no force nor conſtraint put upon their inclinations; nor any cauſe or occaſion given to juſtifie their Separation; then may they be truly ſaid to act voluntarily and without cauſe. And if this be our caſe, we muſt confeſs our ſelves guilty of Schiſm, but if not, then are we unjuſtly charged with it.

That our receſſion from the Church of *Rome*, was not a voluntary act in us, but a neceſſity upon us, occaſioned by force and violence, conſtraint and compulſion, is plain and evident. We did not attempt a Separation, but only deſired a Reformation, that ſo we might walk together in the Houſe of God as friends; If they would have hearkned to us, and removed thoſe errours and abuſes, thoſe ſuperſtitions and corruptions, that tyranny and uſurpation, which they had introduced into the Faith, Worſhip and Government of Chriſt's Church, we had ſtill peaceably continued in Communion with them. But ſo far were they from hearkning to theſe our juſt deſires, that inſtead thereof, we were menaced with fire and fagot, with Impriſonment, with confiſcation of our Eſtates, with all kind of ſufferings, and even death it ſelf, if we refuſed to comply with their Corruptions and Innovations. And therefore we may truly ſay with the Learned *Cauſaubon*, *Non fugimus ſed fugamur*, We did not run away from them, but were driven away by them. *Cauſaub. ad Peron.*

But yet notwithſtanding all this force and violence, if we had not ſufficient cauſe to juſtifie our receſſion, we muſt ſtill be criminal; for we are of opinion with *Dionyſius*

Euseb. l. 6. c. 44. *nysius Alex.* in his Epistle to *Novatus*, That any thing must rather be born, than that we should rend asunder the Church of God. But alas we had too great cause for what we did; The Church of *Rome* had corrupted the Faith of God's Church with her unwarrantable additions and alterations; The primitive beauty and purity of God's Worship she had defaced with Superstitions: That goodly and well compacted structure of Goverament which had been erected and established in the Church of God, she had quite demolished; and instead thereof had erected an unheard of tyrannical Government unknown to the primitive Church, and condemned by all other Churches, ever since it appeared in the World. In a word she had made the terms of her Communion such, as could not be complyed with without sin; and when it is sin to communicate, it cannot be sin to separate.

Thus much I hope may suffice, to satisfie any indifferent and unprejudic'd Reader, that the recession of the Church of *England*, from that of *Rome* in her Reformation, was neither owing to a dividing humour, nor without just cause. And therefore she is unjustly charged with the guilt of Schism by the Church of *Rome* upon that account.

5. Schism is a voluntary and causeless Separation from the Communion of a Christian Church of which we are Members, *i. e.* which hath a Jurisdiction over us, and to which we owe Subjection and Obedience. Schism imports a breach of Unity, a dividing of that Body which before was but one; it implies the casting off of a lawfull Jurisdiction, to which we were obliged to yield Subjection and Obedience. Now if we neither are, nor ever were of right Subjects of that Church; if we neither are, nor ever were such parts of that Body as are to depend upon the Head of it, then can we not justly be charged with breaking the Unity of that Church, or dividing

viding of that Body, becauſe that Church, or that Body doth ſtill remain the ſame it was notwithſtanding our receſſion therefrom. And if it neither hath, nor ever had any lawfull Juriſdiction over us, then we neither do, nor ever did owe any ſubjection or obedience thereunto; and therefore cannot without great injuſtice be charged with a Schiſmatical Separation therefrom.

To prove this Negative, would require a much longer Diſcourſe than is now deſigned; and therefore at preſent I ſhall only ſay, that this we inſiſt upon. That the Church of *England* neither is, nor ever was by any divine Authority bound to be in obedience to the Church of *Rome*. And when ever they pleaſe to make their claim, we are ready to defend our ſelves againſt it. In the mean time, till they make this good, they have no reaſon to brandus, (as hitherto they have unjuſtly done) with the odious Names of Schiſmaticks and Hereticks.

Thus have I taken a review of the ſeveral parts of the Definition, which (if it be allowed) will fairly acquit the Church of *England* from the guilt of Schiſm. And now let us ſee, whether the Church of *Rome* can ſo well diſcharge her ſelf of it.

SECT. XIII.

The Church of Rome *guilty of that Schiſm, with which they charge the Church of* England.

IT is a rule generally allowed, that the Cauſe makes the Schiſm. If the Church gives cauſe of Separation, there is the Schiſm; if not, the cauſe of Schiſm is in the Separatiſt. So that where the cauſe is found, there the charge of Schiſm reſteth. If therefore the Church of *Rome* hath given juſt cauſe of Separation from her, then is the cauſally guilty of that Schiſm; and I am afraid will hardly

hardly be able to acquit herſelf from being ſo, of almoſt all other Schiſms in the Church.

Their ingenuous *Caſſander* confeſſeth, that the *Roman* Church is not a little changed from her ancient beauty and brightneſs, and that ſhe is deformed with many diſeaſes, and vicious diſtempers. And being thus ſick, St. *Bernhard* undertakes to be her Phyſician, and preſcribes her a Diet, which he tells us muſt be profitable though unpleaſing; *i. e.* ſhe ought to be reproved, and a Reformation required. And if thereupon an offence be taken, the ſame St. *Bernhard* ſhall acquaint you where the ſcandal will reſt, When faults are taxed, and ſcandal grows thereupon. He is the cauſe of the ſcandal, who did that which was worthy to be reproved, not he that reproved the ill doer. And that the Church of *Rome* hath given occaſion both to the reproof and ſcandal, let their own Preſident in the Council of *Trent* inform you, Who ſaith, That *the Depravation and Corruption of Diſcipline and Manners in the Church of* Rome, *was in a great meaſure the Cauſe and Original of all thoſe Schiſms and Hereſies, which then troubled the Church.*

Caſſ. de Offic. boni viri, &c.

Bernh. de vita ſolit.

Bernh. ad Hug. de Santto vict. Epiſt. 77.

Orat. præſ. Concil. Trident. Seſſ. 11.

But that it may appear that I have a deſire to deal fairly and friendly with them, I ſhall here preſent them with a Copy of their Charge, and give them time to plead to it. The Charge was long ſince drawn up by two great men of our Church, *viz.* Biſhop *Hall*, and Biſhop *Bramhal*, and never yet pleaded to that I know, much leſs cleared.

Biſhop *Hall* in a little Book intituled *The Old Religion*, dedicated to his Dioceſs of *Exeter*, chap. 4. lays down their Charge in theſe five particulars.

1. *Nothing can be more plain, than that the* Roman *is a particular Church, as the Fathers of* Baſil *well diſtinguiſh it, not the Univerſal; though we take in the Churches of*

of her ſubordination or correſpondence. This truth we might make good by authority, if our very ſenſes did not ſave us the labour.

2. *No particular Church (to ſay nothing of the Univerſal ſince the Apoſtolick times) can have power to make a fundamental point of Faith; It may explain or declare, it cannot create Articles.*

3. *Only an Errour againſt a point of Faith, is Hereſie.*

4. *Thoſe points wherein we differ from* Romaniſts *are they, which only the Church of* Rome *hath made fundamental, and of Faith.*

5. *The Reformed, therefore being by that Church illegally condemned for thoſe points, are not Hereticks.*

This I take to be a fair diſcharge for the Church of *England* from that foul aſperſion which hath been caſt upon her by the Church of *Rome.* But Biſhop *Bramhal* chargeth them more home, and particularly in five Articles more, and lays the ſin at their door.

1. *The Church of* Rome *uſurps an higher place and power in the Body Eccleſiaſtical, than of right is due unto her.*

2. *She ſeparateth, both by her Doctrines and Cenſures, three parts of the Chriſtian World from her Communion, and as much as in her lies, from the Communion of Chriſt.*

3. *She rebelleth againſt general Councils.*

4. *She breaks, or takes away all the lines of Appoſtolical Succeſſion except her own; and appropriates all Original Juriſdiction to her ſelf.*

5. *She challenges a temporal power over Princes, either directly or indirectly; which draws Sedition and Rebellion after it, and is no ſmall aggravation of their Schiſm.*

Theſe are the things we charge them with; if they can truly plead not guilty thereunto, then are we criminal; But if they cannot, if theſe things be really true, then are they cauſally guilty of that Schiſm with which they would charge us; and the whole weight with all the dreadfull conſequences thereof will lie at their doors, and be an heavy burthen upon them.

SECT. XIV.

The Concluſion.

THat there is, and for a long time hath been a great and grievous Schiſm in the Church, and that thoſe who have

have been guilty of it, have miserably rent and torn, and even eaten out the Bowels of their common Mother, What considering Person can be ignorant? and who can know it without tears of pity, and prayers to God for the restoration of the Church's Peace and Unity? This would much better become us, than disputing about it; and this, I declare, should have been my Province, had not the daily and loud Clamours of the guilty party so unjustly assaulted the Church of *England*, and forced me from my Privacy, to undertake this necessary and just Defence of my dear Mother.

It hath for a long time been matter of debate, and a ball of contention, where the cause of the Schism was to be found: The Church of *Rome* with great confidence and assurance, hath laid it at the door of the Church of *England*; and that Church upon better grounds, hath charged the Church of *Rome* with it: I pray God open both their and our Eyes, that we may all see and know the things that belong unto our Peace; that laying aside all rancour and animosity, we may at last join hearts and hands to promote Truth and Holiness, and study nothing more than to *keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace.*

For my own part, I have so great an abhorrence for the sin of Schism, that I do seriously profess, if I were convinced, that the Church of *England* were guilty of the Schism, I would rather chuse to suffer any thing elsewhere, than continue in it; but, God be thanked, I am otherwise perswaded, and so well satisfied therein, that as I have lived, so I hope I shall die in the Communion of that Church.

But alas! Perfect Peace and Unity are too great Blessings to be hoped for in this sinfull World; they may be Objects of our Prayers, but hardly of our Hopes. However if we are what we pretend to be, *i. e.* humble and obedient Christians, it would well become us, in our several Stations, to observe the Apostle's Rule, which bids us, *Follow Peace with all Men, and Holiness, without which no Man shall see the Lord*, Heb. 12. v. 14. *Now the God of Peace, who brought again from the Dead our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the Sheep, through the Blood of the Everlasting Covenant, make us all perfect in all good Works, to do his Will, working in us that which is pleasant in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise for ever and ever, Amen.* Heb. 13. v. 20, 21.

FINIS.